DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 241 031 IR 050 639

TITLE	Report of the Evaluation Meeting on the Caribbean Information System (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, July 6-8, 1983).
INSTITUTION	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, Port-of-Spain (Trinadad). Caribbean Documentation Centre.
REPORT NO	E/CEPAL/CDCC/106
PUB DATE	Aug 83
NOTE	39p.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Abstracts; Databases; Developing Nations; *Documentation; Guidelines; *Information Centers; *Information Services; *International Organizations; Program Evaluation; Social Planning; Socioeconomic Influences
IDENTIFIERS	*Caribbean; *Caribbean Information System Economic Social Plan

ABSTRACT

This publication outlines the activities and impact of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning (CARISPLAN), as reported by representatives of 16 Caribbean nations and various regional organizations. A copy of the meeting agenda and other introductory material are followed by brief summaries of reports from representatives of the Caribbean Documentation Centre (CDC), Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts/Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the Caribbean Development Bank, and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat. CARISPLAN technical aspects and services, the CARISPLAN Abstracts, the CDC Current Awareness Bulletin, and two CARISPLAN databases are also briefly evaluated. Recommendations developed during the meeting are listed, covering CARISPLAN input procedures, document deposit, database scope, abstracting and indexing for CARISPLAN, CDC training, the production and format of CARISPLAN Abstracts, CARISPLAN computerization, the impact of CARISPLAN upon users, the distribution of CARISPLAN abstracts, abstracting languages, services available from the system, and CDC document delivery. Appendices present a list of meeting participants, a copy of the opening address by Anthony Jacelon of Trinidad and Tobago, and a list of documents arising from the meeting. (ESR)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

THE CARIBBEAN REGION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED241031

E/CEPAL/CDCC/106
August 1983
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE
Evaluation Meeting on the Caribbean Information System

REPORT OF THE EVALUATION MEETING ON THE CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM

(6-8 July 1983
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago)

IR057639

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean
P.O. Box 1113, Port-of-Spain, TRINIDAD.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
CARISPLAN
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING		
	Attendance	2-3	1
	Officers of the Meeting	4	1
	Agenda	5	2-3
	Opening Session	6-12	4
II.	EVALUATION OF THE CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM		
	Activities of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning, 1979-1983	13	6
	Presentations by national representatives -		
	BARBADOS	14	6
	BELIZE	15-16	6-7
	CUBA	17-19	7
	DOMINICA	20-21	7
	THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	22	8
	GRENADA	23-24	8
	GUYANA	25-27	8-9
	HAITI	28-29	9
	JAMAICA	30-35	9-10
	MONTSERRAT	36-38	10
	THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	39-40	10
	ST. KITTS/NEVIS	41	10
	ST. LUCIA	42	11
	ST. VINCENT	43-46	11
	SURINAME	47-51	11-12
	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	52-55	12
	Regional Organizations -		
	CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	56-58	12-13
	CARICOM SECRETARIAT	59-65	13-14
	Orientation tour of the Caribbean Documentation Centre	66-67	14
	Evaluation of the Technical Aspects of CARISPLAN	68-74	14-15
	Evaluation of the Services of the Caribbean Information System - Economic and Social Planning Sector	75-79	15
	Evaluation of products of the System with specific reference to CARISPLAN Abstracts and the Current Awareness Bulletin of the Caribbean Documentation Centre	80-83	16

		Paragraphs	Page
	Evaluation of the CARBIB and CARCAT data bases	84-87	17
III.	CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING		
	Input Procedures	89	18-19
	Deposit of Documents entered in the CARISPLAN	90	19
	Scope of the data base	91	19
	Abstracting for CARISPLAN	92	19
	Indexing	93	19-20
	Training	94-100	20-21
	Production of CARISPLAN Abstracts	101-103	21
	Format of CARISPLAN Abstracts	104-106	21
	Computerization	107-111	21-22
	Impact of the System on users	112-114	22-23
	The Distribution of CARISPLAN Abstracts	115-116	23
	Languages	117-118	23
	Services available from the System	119	23
	Document delivery	120-121	23-24
ANNEX	I - List of Participants		25-28
ANNEX	II - Opening address by Senator Anthony Jacelon, Minister, Ministry of Finance and Planning, Trinidad and Tobago		29-32
ANNEX	III - List of Documents		33-35

Chapter I

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The Evaluation Meeting on the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning (CARISPLAN) was held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 6-8 July, 1983. The Meeting was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, under the sponsorship of the International Development Research Centre, (Ottawa, Canada).

Attendance 1/

2. Representatives of the following member countries attended the meeting: Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.

3. Representatives of the following sub-regional inter-governmental organizations also attended the session: the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

Officers of the Meeting

4. The representative of the host country served as chairman of the opening session:

Chairman: Patricia Raymond (Trinidad and Tobago).

1/ The full list of Participants appears at Annex 1.

Agenda

5. The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

1. Summary of activities of the Caribbean Information System (1979-1983).

2. Presentations by national representatives on:
   - The value of the Caribbean Information System; existing situation and problems experienced.
   - The impact of the System on the national infrastructure (including information infrastructure).
   - Use of the System as reflected by statistics kept by the National Focal Points and by the participating centres.
   - Types of requests answered by the System.
   - Types of requests which have not been met by the System.

3. Orientation tour of the Caribbean Documentation Centre.

4. Evaluation of Technical Aspects of the Caribbean Information System.
   - The preparation of bibliographic records.
   - Rationale for changes.
   - Techniques used.
   - Training methods.
   - Training manuals.
   - Problems of preparing input.
   - Discussion.
   - Recommendations.

5. Evaluation of products of the Caribbean Information System
   - CARISPLAN Abstracts.
   - Current Awareness Bulletin.

6. Evaluation of CARBIB and CARCAT data bases.
   - Coverage.
   - Type of information held.
   - Input statistics.

- Discussion.
- Recommendations.

7. The services of the Caribbean Information System.

   - The Caribbean Documentation Centre..
   - Reference services.
   - Document delivery.
   - Statistics of use by:
     (a) National Focal Points
     (b) Participating centres.
   - Access to computerized services.

8. Services received by the National Focal Points and Participating centres.

   - Discussion.
   - Recommendations.

9. The impact of the System on users.

   - Statistics of use.
   - Types of users.
   - Users' attitudes.
   - Role of information in development projects.
   - Evaluation of activities for promotion of the System.

10. Recommendations for the future development of the System.

11. Closing Session.

    - Summary of conclusions.
    - Closing address: Director ECLA Office for the Caribbean.

Opening Session

6. The opening session held on 6 July 1983 was honoured by the presence of the Minister in the Ministry of Finance and Planning of Trinidad and Tobago, Senator Anthony Jacelon. Addresses were delivered by the Honourable Minister; Mr. Wilfred Whittingham, Deputy Director of the ECLA Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean and Ms. Wilma Primus, Project Co-ordinator of the Caribbean Information System. A message of greetings from the International Development Research Centre was also read to the meeting.

7. Senator Jacelon congratulated the ECLA Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean, and the participating countries for the progress which had been made in the development of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning. He said that the type of information which is provided by the System is of great value to policy-makers and planners in Trinidad and Tobago, especially with the increasing economic integration activities in the Caribbean. He expressed the hope that the services would continue to be increasingly dynamic as this would enable users to direct their energies to effective decision-making.

8. Ms. Wilma Primus, Project Co-ordinator of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning, provided an overview of the existing situation, indicating some of the achievements and constraints, and identifying a framework for evaluation.

9. The national participation had increased from six active focal points with organized collections to twelve, whil. 150 participating centres provide input and are able to use the services. Technical assistance missions, regional workshops, and in-service training have led to a significant measure of standardization, and a greater participation in and use of the System's resources. The major constraint recognized was the desire to maintain international compatibility and the absence of the type of computer facilities at the Caribbean co-ordinating centre which would guarantee timeliness of input, processing and dissemination of CARISPLAN data.

10. In addition the Project Co-ordinator identified the following areas for evaluation:

- promotion of the development of national information infrastructure
- measures to expedite technical processes
- requirements for preparing input and possible modification
- consistency of indexing in the data base
- selection policy for inputting documents
- training methods adopted and tools provided
- effectiveness of the products in meeting the information needs of the community served
- format of the products
- coverage and currency of the products and of the data base

11. Mr. Wilfred Whittingham, Deputy Director of the ECLA Sub-regional Office for the Caribbean also welcomed the progress of the System and said that from his own experience, he had seen the great need for a system such as the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning. The System was now able to inform users in general planning disciplines, as well as in planning specific areas of development.

12. He thanked the countries for their participation and wished for a successful meeting.

Chapter II

Activities of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning, 1979-1983

13. Activities of the Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning, 1979-1983 were outlined by a representative of the Caribbean Documentation Centre. The paper summarized the objectives, as supporting social and economic planning, research and development at national and sub-regional levels, by making timely and relevant information available to each country according to existing and potential user needs, and by promoting the optimum use of the available information resources by planners, policy-makers and other technical personnel. The main activities to achieve this objective were sensitization meetings, technical assistance and training of librarians with a view to developing national focal points and the data base, and regular consultation on the services provided.

BARBADOS

14. The representative of Barbados reported that her country had been actively participating in the System since 1979. The Central Bank had undertaken local coordination in the absence of a librarian in the Ministry of Planning. Meetings with librarians and representatives of socio-economic organizations, as well as workshops and working groups had served to familiarize representatives of participating centres with the structure of the System, the services available, and the requirements for participation. Input continues to be co-ordinated by the Central Bank of Barbados Library, but librarians and users have direct links with the Caribbean Documentation Centre.

BELIZE

15. Although Belize does not yet have a national focal point, the Belize representative stated that it was the intention of his government to establish one in the near future. Appropriate staff and physical facilities are to be provided, and plans are underway for this. The colleciton of the Ministry of Finance will form the nucleus of the National Focal Point, and further development will be done in conjunction with the other Ministries

and departments to establish an integrated system providing service to all members of the government service.

16. Belize has this year begun to input bibliographic records into the System, and expects to increase both participation and use when the permanent full-time staff has been established. Participation in the System was also seen as an impetus for the development of the National Information Sytem.

CUBA

17. Since Cuba began participating in the System, meetings and workshops with policy-makers, technical personnel, and librarians have helped to increase the national participation. The information provided by the CARISPLAN Abstracts has been rated as highly valuable, by the technical and research personnel and other professionals who have used it.

18. Response to requests for document delivery has not been completely satisfactory, however, and this has hindered full use of the System.

19. More speedy production of CARISPLAN Abstracts was also recommended, and it was proposed that information included in CARISPLAN Abstracts should not be dated, but should refer only to currently produced documents.

DOMINICA

20. The representative of Dominica said that she was pleased to report that a national focal point had been established in the Ministry of Finance with the assistance of the Caribbean Development Bank. Further assistance had been provided by the Caribbean Documentation Centre. The meetings with senior officials had served as a means of user education, but unfortunately, it had not been possible for the development of the services to keep pace with the demands, and it was therefore recognized that a significant amount of development of the system was necessary to keep users supplied with the services demanded.

21. A project proposal has been prepared to IDRC for special funding of the Documentation Centre, and it is expected that this will greatly assist in the improvement of the services provided.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

22. The Dominican Republic participated in the System since 1979, had used the services and been represented at seminars and workshops. Participation had been greatly accelerated however by recent activities. The Centro Dominicano para la Promoción de Exportaciones (CEDOPEX) had assumed the responibilities of National Focal Point and efforts at co-ordination had coincided with the holding of a workshop on Techniques for effective participation in the Caribbean Information System. Input had been prepared as a result of the workshop, and it is planned that there will be greater participation by the other organizations producing socio-economic information.

GRENADA

23. The Grenada representative stated that the Caribbean Information System had had significant impact on the development of the information infrastructure in the country. Technical assistance missions and advisory services provided by the CDC had helped to establish the Documentation Centre and to provide services to the policy-makers and planners Input had been provided and the services of the System had been used. A project proposal had also been submitted to IDRC for technical assistance in developing the Documentation Centre.

24. The Grenada representative expressed the support of her Government for the Caribbean Information System, and for its future development

GUYANA

25. Guyana's representative reported that it was the consensus amongst the information seekers and users as well as the information handlers community in her country that the Caribbean Information System is undoubtedly of great value, but that use was limited because of lack of awareness of the role, function and activities of the System. Continuous user education programmes and other promotional activities are therefore recommended as a means of increasing use of the System.

26. The Caribbean Information System has provided some impetus to activities in the national information system especially in the co-ordination of the national socio-economic network, and in its

various training programmes.

27. The main problems, however, in the use of the System were inadequate communication facilities between the national focal point and the Caribbean Documentation Centre, as this has delayed the appearance of Guyana's input and the receipt of ECLA publications.

HAITI

28. The delegate representing Haiti, stated that the Caribbean Information System had had significant impact on the information infrastructure of his country. The earlier period of in-service training had helped the internal development of the national focal point, and the workshop had helped librarians to be more familiar with various aspects of the system, and with new techniques in information handling. The workshop on techniques for participation in the Caribbean Information System had greatly influenced participation and would encourage input to and use of the System.

29. The language problem was a constraint, however, in the use of the System. There was need for more translation of the introductory section and of the abstracts to make it more useful to policy-makers and planners in Haiti.

JAMAICA

30. The Jamaica representative presented a paper which outlined the development of the socio-economic information network in Jamaica, and Jamaica's participation in CARISPLAN.

31. Participation in CARISPLAN had provided impetus for co-operation between organizations producing socio-economic information and had greatly helped the development of the local information network.

32. Training courses in indexing and abstracting had been used to provide basic training for the network librarians and had helped in preparation of input for the national abstracting bulletin, SECIN Abstracts, and for CARISPLAN Abstracts.

33. The services of the System had been used directly by individual users and also by the librarians of the national focal point and participating centres.

34. The main problem in the use of the System was speedy access to

the actual documents recorded in CARISPLAN, at the time when these were needed and it was recommended that the CDC make some provision for speedier document delivery.

35. Recommendations were also made for additional workshops in indexing and abstracting to train librarians who had not been able to participate in the two which were held earlier.

MONTSERRAT

36. The Montserrat representative described the activities of setting up a library to serve as the national focal point for the Caribbean Information System, and the services now provided for users at the national level.

37. Input of bibliographic records has been increasing and CARISPLAN Abstracts and the Current Awareness Bulletin are used in conjunction with the user profiles to locate material which can satisfy users needs.

38. Recommendations were made for the preparation of user education packages, inclusion of additional information on the User Profile forms, and, development of the Bibliographic Record Card for general use.

THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

39. That country's representative reported that although there was not yet a national focal point for the Netherlands Antilles, the missions from the Caribbean Documentation Centre had provided impetus for the planning of one, which would be established in the near future. In the interim, individuals had been using the services of the Caribbean Information System, and this had aided them in particular exercises, especially those involving activities of co-operation.

40. Further assistance was required from ECLA for training in techniques of participation.

ST. KITTS/NEVIS

41. The development of a national focal point in St. Kitts/Nevis was reported by the representative to be considered a priority by her government. An inter-departmental committee had been established and ECLA's assistance in establishing a documentation centre to serve as a national focal point was expected to be a useful input to the plans.

ST. LUCIA

42. This country's representative reported that various factors had prevented the development of the components of the national information system, including the national focal point. It had therefore been difficult to prepare input and to monitor use. It was expected that the Director of the National Information System would be able to provide some impetus to the development of services to policy-makers and it was also expected that additional assistance would be requested from ECLA.

ST. VINCENT

43. The development of a documentation centre to serve as a national focal point for the Caribbean Information System had been initiated in 1981 and the centre's activities were now on stream.

44. The St. Vincent representative also reported that efforts were being made to channel locally-produced material into the documentation centre and to overcome reluctance on the part of some officials to deposit locally produced material in the centre. It was expected that user education seminars would be able to help in solving this problem

45. Assistance from IDRC and ECLA had greatly helped by providing training for staff and by providing other assistance in further developing the documentation centre.

46. The Government had indicated its committment to the Centre and to the Caribbean Information System, and this was expected to provide additional impetus for the development of the national information system.

SURINAME

47. The representative of Suriname reported that participation in the Caribbean Information System had encouraged co-operation among special librarians and developed an interest in locally produced publications, but the librarians of the participating centres found the preparation of input to be time consuming.

48. Users are as yet only from two organizations, and information requested from the CDC had been received in some cases but not always

49. CARISPLAN Abstracts has been used mainly as a librarian's tool, rather than by individual users.

50. Access to locally produced documents for input to CARISPLAN has not been as effective as would be desirable, and it was expected that the information specialists could solve this by informing users and potential users of the System and its services. Longer meetings with users during the workshops were therefore recommended.

51. Access to issues of CARISPLAN Abstracts was not rapid enough for it to be effectively used.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

52. Trinidad and Tobago had agreed to participation since the inception of the System; had attended workshops and meetings, and had provided input of bibliographic records for the data base.

53. A national workshop held in May of this year had provided more input, and had increased the number of libraries participating to 21.

54. The problem of access to the locally produced material, for input to CARISPLAN Abstracts, had been recognized and was discussed during the workshop, and as a result a proposal for de-classification of government reports had been presented to the Government for approval of subsequent de-classification procedures.

55. Use had been made of CARISPLAN Abstracts by librarians and by individual users, and it was expected that the recent receipt of a cummulative print-out of holdings related to Trinidad and Tobago would provide a greater degree of access to this material.

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

56. The Bank's representative said that although the CDB had agreed in May 1979 to participate, and had participated in relevant workshops, it was the computerization of the CDB's holdings which had provided facilities for preparation of bibliographic records in the CARISPLAN format. Records have therefore been prepared for 80% of CDB's documents produced from 1970 onwards.

57. CARISPLAN Abstracts is of great relevance to the Bank, and is used for reference as well as an aid in acquisition.

58. The main problems identified were those of preparation of bibliographic records, the OECD Macrothesaurus being inadequate, and not adequately updated. The CDC was therefore requested to aid in standardization by circulating lists of desciptors incorporated, and corporate authors incorporated into the data base, and convene a meeting on updating the OECD Macrothesaurus.

CARICOM SECRETARIAT

59. The Secretariat's representative congratulated ECLA on its significant achievement of having established national focal points, and saw these as providing a boost to the Secretariat's programme of aiding the development of National Information Systems.

60. There was still, however, need for continuing programmes of sensitization of users and of promotion of the System, and of further specialized training of librarians.

61. CARISPLAN was considered to be very relevant to the programme of the CARICOM Secretariat, to have provided a useful aid to regional standardization and to be an important search tool in the Spanish, French and Dutch-speaking Caribbean.

62. 1981 and 1982 issues have proven progressively useful as reference tools and have aided in the preparation of subject bibliographies especially in the location of unpublished documents.

63. Recommendations were made for:

- Printing out in the journal only the more recent entries - within three years of the date of publication of each document.
- Aids in the identification of the indexes, the author and subject being most used.
- Providing a cummulated index every three years.
- Inclusion of the symbols for categories by purpose in the subject index.

64. The de-classification programme for the CARICOM Secretariat's documents is expected to increase input of important documents into the data base.

65. It was recognized that response from participating organizations

would influence the final product and it was hoped that there would be an increased input from the Caribbean Development Bank, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, and the ECLA Office for the Caribbean, as well as from the academic institutions.

Orientation tour of the Caribbean Documentation Centre

66. The delegates were taken on a tour of the Caribbean Documentation Centre where they were able to see the newly expanded facilities, as well as the data entry processes for CARISPLAN. During the tour they were able to clarify questions relating to their participation in CARISPLAN.

67. During the meeting they were also able to make use of some of the CARISPLAN data base which was on diskette, and which had been installed in the meeting room on a Radio Shack TRS-80 Model II, similar to the one held by the Caribbean Documentation Centre.

Evaluation of the technical aspects of CARISPLAN

68. The presentation by the Caribbean Documentation Centre explained the rationale for selection of the various processes, and identified the main parameters as computer hardware and software and desire for regional and international standardization. The compatibility with ISBN, the CARICOM and National Bibliographies, and in-house data bases was also seen as a potential problem as yet unsolved.

69. The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules are used as the authority for form of entries and the inclusion of national and regional organizations has led to the need for a CARISPLAN Authority File which is being edited for circulation.

70. Changes in the input format and in the corresponding manual would now permit this to be used not only for monographs and analytical entries but also for serials as entities.

71. Training manuals have helped to determine techniques of processing and the scope of the system, but it was recognized that there was still the question of inclusion of the specialized technical studies.

72. The main problem of the subject analysis was seen as the limitation of the OECD Macrothesaurus. A list of descriptors included in the CARISPLAN data base had therefore been prepared for circulation at the meeting.

73. The degree of verification by the CDC's Indexing Supervisor was seen as being related to access to the actual documen , and deposit of documents corresponding to the bibliographic records was evidently required.

74. Retrieval was mainly through CARISPLAN Abstracts, although copies of the data base could be provided to participating centres with appropriate hardware.

Evaluation of the Services of the Caribbean Information System - Economic and Social Planning Sector

75. The CDC's collection building policy, based on current country profiles and priorities of the CDCC's work programme, provide a meaningful basis for information support to member states. This, along with deposit of CARISPLAN documents had helped to add, since 1981, an additional 32,000 documents and serials issues to the centre's collection.

76. The Current Awareness Bulletin, CARISPLAN Abstracts and special bibliographies are the regular services along with document delivery services as back up to the reference services.

77. Document delivery, and production of CARISPLAN Abstracts have not been as speedy as would be desired, and delegates were asked to select and recommend measures for more effective provision of these services.

78. Although there was not complete online access to the data base, the CDC could be requested to search for particular subjects according to defined data elements.

79. Other online services have also been accessed through UN agencies and the IDRC library.

Evaluation of products of the System with specific reference to CARISPLAN Abstracts and the Current Awareness Bulletin of the Caribbean Documentation Centre

80. The presentation by the Caribbean Documentation Centre identified the objectives of CARISPLAN as:

> "supporting social and economic planning, research and development at national and sub-regional levels, by making timely and relevant information available to each country according to existing and potential user needs and by promoting the optimum use of information resources available in the region, by policy-makers, planners and other technical personnel"

and possible information needs as:

> "need for single items, specific documents, documents on a particular subject, or a comprehensive search"

as well as:

> "information for solution of a problem and for current awareness".

81. The main criterion for the satisfaction of users' needs was accessibility of information. It was considered by the CDC that the selection policies and procedures, Current Awareness Bulletin, coverage of the Bulletin and CARISPLAN Abstracts, currency of coverage, the access points, the layout and guides, and the quality of indexing and abstracting contributed to the accessibility of the information required.

82. It was recognized, however, that delays in production of CARISPLAN Abstracts, searching methods required for CARISPLAN Abstracts, and the lack of availability of online services reduced the access which users might desire to the information.

83. Analyses of input to CARISPLAN Abstracts by user category, and the results of the evaluation questionnaires on the Current Awareness Bulletin and the special bibliographies on alternative energy, transport, and development planning were circulated as an additional basis for discussion.

Evaluation of the CARBIB and CARCAT data bases

84. This evaluation was based on a sample diskette of the first nine issues of CARISPLAN Abstracts, and on records input by the CDC and participating centres, and covered format and compatibility, subject and geographical coverage, document type, growth of the data base and its potential value to the region.

85. Compatibility had been sought with the UNISIST Reference Manual in the functions of interactive data entry, data editing, data base creation, and record maintainance, retrieval and output. The System's design guaranteed this compatibility with international systems, but might have reduced compatibility with services within the region.

86. An analysis by subject showed the areas covered and their percentage of the data base. The government organizations were the main producers but there was also coverage by universities and research institutes, international and regional organizations, individuals and non-governmental organizations. While the data base contained documents on all countries, delegates were asked to compare this coverage with the relevant literature produced by their respective countries.

87. The worksheets received and checked by the Centre showed a steady increase and constant growth rate, and delegates were asked in their group discussions to consider the accessibility of the items in the data base, and the potential, intrinsic and lasting value of the data base, especially in relation to the number of documents or reports which have appeared in published form or may eventually do so.

Chapter III

Conclusions of the Meeting

88. During the meeting, participants presented and discussed proposals for the future development of the System. These were finalized and confirmed by the representative at the last session.

89. INPUT PROCEDURES

1. The input is to be printed by the CDC in card form. The maximum length of each field is to be noted on the card.

2. The new Bibliographic Record Card is to be distributed to all National Focal Points and regional organizations as soon as printing has been completed.

3. The CDC will investigate the possibilities of simultaneous use of the old and new formats, and will inform National Focal Points and regional organizations as soon as this has been determined.

4. Where feasible, input could also be by diskette or computer tape.

5. The CDC was requested to prepare a corporate authority file of headings used in the data base, and to circulate this and updatings to all participating centres periodically.

6. Since bibliographic records for many of the documents selected for CARISPLAN will also be entered in the national bibliographies and the CARICOM Bibliography, the meeting recognized the need for compatibility of the two formats and for the use of a single format if at all feasible. It was therefore recommended that the Editorial Boards or Committees of each of the bibliographies be requested to review their present formats in the light of the recommendations of the Dierickx report.

7. The meeting proposed that a desired development which would increase users' access to the actual documents, is the inclusion of multiple locations for each document entered in the System. The CDC was especially requested to add its symbol to the location

field for documents held by the CDC and Participating Centres.

90. DEPOSIT OF DOCUMENTS ENTERED IN THE CARISPLAN

It was generally agreed that the CDC should receive copies of each document listed in CARISPLAN. It was recognized, however, that this would not always be possible, and therefore it was agreed that documents should be deposited in the CDC whenever possible and feasible.

91. SCOPE OF THE DATA BASE

1. As the meeting wished to maintain the scope of CARISPLAN as socio-economic, it was agreed that the selection process as outlined in the introduction to CARISPLAN Abstracts should be maintained.

2. Other technical material is also likely to interest users, and therefore it should be collected where available, held in the data base with specific identification and occasionally printed out separately.

3. Socio-economic information on the French-speaking Caribbean should be included.

4. All material included should be of a level to provide new information to policy-makers and planners.

92. ABSTRACTING FOR CARISPLAN

The meeting stressed that the information contained in the abstracts should continue to be accurate, and proposed that the style needed to be improved especially by use of more concise phraseology.

93. INDEXING

1. The OECD Macrothesaurus was found to be inadequate, and needing to be supplemented by specialized thesauri. Use of the recently produced Dag Hammarskjold Library's UNBIS Thesaurus was also recommended as a supplementary tool.

2. The list of proposed descriptors was welcomed as useful and the CDC was requested to circulate an updated list periodically.

3. It was recommended that a meeting of users of the Macrothesaurus should be convened. This meeting would submit recommendations to the editorial board of the next edition.

4. Copies of the present edition of the Macrothesaurus would still be required until the new edition was available. The Spanish edition was particularly in demand as this edition was completely out of print and some participating centres had no copies The CDC and national focal points should therefore investigate the possibility of reproduction of the Macrothesaurus on microfiche or in hard copy.

5. The list of specialized thesauri which was circulated was also welcomed. The CDC was requested to supply copies of the introductions and sample pages to national focal points and participating centres, when requested.

94. TRAINING

The CDC was requested to hold more training courses, as those which had been held were too short, and follow-up was therefore needed.

95. Longer workshops were particularly requested for the countries which could not have the workshops in their native language.

96. The national focal points would play a more dynamic role and local resources would be used wherever possible to ensure a desired multiplier effect.

97. The CDC was also requested to update the training manuals which had been issued since the inception of the System.

98. The CDC was also requested to continue in-service training of librarians at the national focal points and at the Caribbean Documentation Centre.

99. The University of the West Indies, Department of Library Studies and other Library Science schools in member countries are to be requested to include in their regular curriculum, courses on indexing and abstracting techniques which can be used in CARISPLAN, and include segments on the

Caribbean Information System in courses on Information Systems and networks.

100. These Universities should also be requested to offer special short courses to graduates.

101. PRODUCTION OF CARISPLAN ABSTRACTS

The time-lag in the production of CARISPLAN Abstracts was viewed as a serious problem. The Meeting therefore recommended that the CDC make arrangements for a special project for speedy production of the back-log.

102. It was also recommended that the contents of each of these issues should be balanced by country and by language grouping. Future issues should contain only records of current documents, i.e., those issued in the preceding three years.

103. Material for the preceding ten years would, however, be entered in the data base, and the CDC was requested to provide an annual print-out of this older material to national focal points.

104. FORMAT OF CARISPLAN ABSTRACTS

The CDC was requested to produce future issues of CARISPLAN Abstracts in the size and printing layout of CARISPLAN 7.

105. It was proposed, however, that the use of the main entries would be greatly facilitated by use of different type faces for each section of the entries. Colour coding, and section separators should also be used within the indexes to point users quickly to the sections required.

106. The CDC was also requested to provide an annual country print-out to each country.

107. COMPUTERIZATION

Several representatives proposed that national focal points should have greater access to the holdings of the data base.

108. The Meeting consequently proposed that a computer network should be established which could provide access to the CARISPLAN data base.

109. It was recognized that it was unlikely that the present telecommunication facilities would permit direct links between national focal points and a computer in the CDC. An acceptable short-term solution was therefore an extension of the decentralized network, in which copies of the CARISPLAN data base produced by or for the CDCwould be available on diskette or hard disk to national focal points. This facility with periodical updatings would provide the much needed access to the holdings of the System.

110. The Meeting emphasized the fundamental need to build up an indigenous capability for information handling based on modern technology, and agreed that a regional project could achieve this aim while maintaining much desired compatibility.

111. Recommendations were also made for:

1. More rapid production of CARISPLAN Abstracts.
2. Production of the journal also by computer output on microfilm.
3. Early use of internationally compatible microcomputer software which will enable the CDC to control its data processing activities, and ensure the diffusion of this capability throughout the region.

112. IMPACT OF THE SYSTEM ON USERS

As the System to date has had greatest impact on the information profession, the meeting recommended that a strategy of user awareness be worked out and adopted, and that promotion of the System and of CARISPLAN Abstracts was needed in all countries.

113. The CDC was therefore requested to organize user education programmes at the national level, and to provide promotional kits and posters which could be used at the seminars and for subsequent promotion of the System.

114. The CDC was also requested to use existing regional newsletters for informing participating centres and users of the System's activities and changes. The CDCC Focus and Carinet, the newsletter published by the

University of the West Indies, Department of Library Studies, were the two, which, it is expected will be used

115. THE DISTRIBUTION OF CARISPLAN ABSTRACTS

The meeting, while recognizing that speedy distribution of the abstracting journal was costly, recommended that as this was such a valuable service, the mailing list should not be shortened but that alternative methods and additional means should be sought to speed up delivery.

116. The total set for each country should therefore be sent to the national focal point by air-mail, by pouch or, by hand, for subsequent re-distribution.

117. LANGUAGES

The meeting agreed that the use of one language for the abstracts reduces the use which can be made of the System. In order to achieve effective exchange of information the CDC was therefore requested to examine more closely the possibility of translation of larger sections of the abstracting journal to complete the objective of CARISPLAN.

118. The translation of the abstracts on request was seen as a short-term solution requiring a more definitive long-term one.

119. SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE SYSTEM

It was agreed that the National Focal Points should play a more positive role in ensuring that the country profiles maintained by the CDC are updated periodically.

120. DOCUMENT DELIVERY

The CDC was requested to establish a systematic document delivery service of material covered in CARISPLAN Abstracts. Participating centres, should, as far as feasible, submit a copy of each document to the regional co-ordinating centre.

121. The use of microform technology was desirable but the Caribbean

Documentation Centre should rationalize its activities with those of other agencies who propose to develop programmes in this area.

ANNEX I

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

CARIBBEAN DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

EVALUATION MEETING ON THE CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM
6-8 July 1983

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BARBADOS	Aldeen C. Payne Assistant Librarian Central Bank of Barbados P.O. Box 1016 Bridgetown
BELIZE	Charles Gibson Government Archivist Belize Archives Department 26-28 Unity Boulevard Belmopan
CUBA	María Elena Reyes Varela Jefe de departamento Centro de Información Científica Técnica Junta Central de Planificación 20 de Mayo y Ayestarán La Habana
DOMINICA	Cornelia Williams Chief Librarian Public Library Roseau
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	Bernardina Torres Jefe División Documentación CEDOPEX Apartado 199-2 Santo Domingo
GRENADA	Clanice Robinson Librarian/Documentalist Documentation Centre Ministry of Planning St. George's

GUYANA	Negla Veronica Ross Librarian State Planning Secretariat 229 South Road Lacytown Georgetown
HAITI	Anne Marie Prudent Directeur Centre de Documentation Ministère des Affaires étrangères Port-au-Prince
	Agousse Telfort Bibliothécaire Centre de Documentation Secrétairerie d'Etat du Plan Port-au-Prince
JAMAICA	Arlene Ononaiwu Acting Chief Librarian National Planning Agency 39-41 Barbados Avenue Kingston 5
MONTSERRAT	Gracelyn Cassell Librarian Development Unit Library Chief Minister's Office Government Headquarters Plymouth
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES	Doreen Jöbsis-Stomp Assistant Librarian University of the Netherlands Antilles Jan Noorduynweg Curaçao
ST. KITTS	Vanta Archibald Librarian Public Library East Square Street Basseterre
ST. LUCIA	Janet Lynch Forde Librarian/Tutor Morne Complex Library Castries

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Pearl F. Herbert
Government Librarian
Public Library/Documentation Centre
Kingstown

SURINAME

Stella M. Pollack-Leeflang
Librarian
Stichting Planbureau Suriname
Dr. Sophie Redmond Straat 118
Paramaribo

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Pamella Benson
Librarian III
Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
P.O. Box 96
Port-of-Spain

June Stewart
Librarian
Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago
P.O. Box 1250
Port-of-Spain

Yvonne Edith Bobb
Secretary/Member
National Library Information and Archives Service (NALIAS)
8 Elizabeth Street
St. Clair

Cheryl Medford
Librarian
Central Library of Trinidad and Tobago
Agostini Building
2A Nelson Street
Port-of-Spain

Hannah Francis
Librarian
Main Library
University of the West Indies
St. Augustine

Patricia Raymond
Librarian
Ministry of Finance + Planning
Fourth Floor - Trinidad House
St. Vincent Street
Port-of-Spain

CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY SECRETARIAT

Carol Collins
Chief
Information and Documentation Section
P.O. Box 10827
Georgetown
GUYANA

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Nancy St. John
Librarian
P.O. Box 408
Wildey
St. Michael
BARBADOS

CEPAL/CLADES

Marta Beya
Technical Supervisor
INFOPLAN
CEPAL/CLADES
Santiago
CHILE

ECLA SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN

Wilma Primus
Project Co-ordinator
Caribbean Information System
P.O. Box 1113
Port-of-Spain
TRINIDAD

Fay Durrant
Library and Information Training Officer
Caribbean Information System
P.O. Box 1113
Port-of-Spain
TRINIDAD

Judith Modeste
Indexing Supervisor

Catherine Shepherd
Indexer

Secretariat:

Elizabeth de Gannes
Rhonda Gibbes
Marilyn Pinkerton
Gloria Ditzen

ANNEX II

OPENING ADDRESS BY SENATOR ANTHONY JACELON,
MINISTER, MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING,
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

Madam Chairman, Representatives of the organizers of the meeting, that is, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (UNECLA), Subregional Office for the Caribbean; participants, special invited guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to address you this morning at the opening session of the Evaluation Meeting on the Caribbean Information System.

Information systems are undergoing a transformation which some have compared to the industrial revolution and the information industry today has been described as the revolution of the 20th Century.

The importance of information and documentation services in support of national and regional planning and development cannot be over-emphasized and in the Caribbean area, the lack of information within and between countries has undoubtedly had the effect of isolating the countries of the area, thereby creating unnecessary barriers which tend to hinder their economic and social development.

It has been noted in a previous workshop on information, that one of the great tragedies of the Caribbean region is that, a tremendous stock of valuable information on the experiences of neighbouring countries is inaccessible because of language barriers and shortage of translation facilities. I would venture to add that regional planning has also been hampered by the fact that the methods and approaches to data collection, processing, storage and retrieval are in general, outdated and lacking in appropriate standards.

No country can progress without institutions with the capacity to develop bibliographic tools for use not only by librarians, but more importantly by planners, policy-makers and technocrats.

/In the

In the specific case of Trinidad and Tobago, we are being constantly and pointedly reminded of the importance of easy access to current and relevant information as we proceed with the preparation of a public sector investment programme and a multisectoral development plan for the country. Indeed, I have been made to understand that the deficiency in our data base is one of the principal factors accounting for the delay in the completion of these exercises.

However, I believe that it will be more opportune to focus on the recent regional economic developments as a means of underlining the significance of an efficient Caribbean Information System. In so doing, I am minded of the fact that many of you attending this meeting are here as representatives of countries within the Caribbean Community and, as I am sure you are aware, the Heads of Government of the member states are at present engaged in intensive discussions on a number of critical issues, the outcome of which will determine the extent to which the integration movement will continue to be an effective mechanism for promoting the economic and social advancement of the populations of all member states.

The deep international recession of the past few years has in many ways underlined the frailty of the individual regional economies and their vulnerability to developments within the international economy. Because of that recession, the demand for the principal exports of the region has fallen and consequently the prices of these products have declined. The most recent regional resource to suffer from the fall in prices is petroleum and petroleum products, the major export of Trinidad and Tobago.

The reduced demand for these exports has resulted in a contraction of production and employment in the affected industries. In addition, because of the smaller inflow of foreign exchange earnings, some countries have been unable to purchase critical imports for use in commercial and social projects. In the extreme case, imported supplies which are vital for the health and comfort of the country's population have had to be severly rationed.

Against this background, member countries have been forced to make difficult adjustments and some of the measures adopted have exerted tremendous strain on the integration movement. The free flow of trade within the region

/has been

has been seriously affected through the imposition of quantitative restrictions and the application of bureaucratic procedures with the objective of containing the growth of imports. Exchange rate modifications have also been used in the manoeuvring to obtain a greater trading advantage over others. Moreover, the mulitlateral payments scheme, the Caribbean multilateral clearing facility, which has been an important mechanism for facilitating the growth of trade, development and employment within the region has been suspended since April this year.

Yet it is generally agreed that the future development of the human and physical resources of the region will depend, to a significant degree, on our ability to adopt a co-ordinated approach to regional economic issues. This is all the more important because there is sufficient evidence to suggest that even when the international economy rebounds from the current recession, the long term viability of some of our basic regional industries could be still in doubt.

It is therefore critical that the planners of the region redouble their efforts in order to prepare the framework within which the necessary adjustments must be pursued if we are to survive as viable economic entities. This, of course, will also require appropriate political commitment on our part.

It is within this broader context that I would like you to pursue your task at this meeting. Some of you already will have been called upon, at very short notice no doubt, to provide some of the background material required by your country's delegation.

The usefulness and effectiveness of the information you provided would have been dependent upon the data bases which are at your disposal, their accuracy, up-to-dateness, and above all, ease of document retrieval.

The objectives of this meeting, which are to examine and evaluate the services and facilities of the Caribbean Information System and to discuss its future development, are therefore appropriate and necessary.

I understand that the System has been in operation now for four years, and it must be appreciated that the development of an efficient

/information

information system takes time; it is costly, needs trained manpower which may not be readily available in the region, and most important, requires the total commitment of the countries involved.

I am sure that I am speaking today to people who are totally committed to the task at hand, and I am sure that the results of this meeting will serve as a vehicle in enabling all Caribbean countries to advance along that arduous road to greater self-sufficiency.

Trinidad and Tobago gratefully acknowledges the financial support provided by the International Development Research Centre of Canada and hope that their assistance to this project will continue.

We also recognize the important contribution made by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America over the years in the development of the Caribbean Information System.

ECLA, I am told, has also been instrumental in the development of the national information infrastructure in many of the less developed Caribbean countries.

Finally, may I close in wishing you every success in your deliberations and by wishing a very pleasant stay to our guests in Trinidad and Tobago.

ANNEX III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. MAIN DOCUMENTS

DOCUMENT NUMBER	TITLE
CDCC/CIS/E/83/1 Rev. 1.	Programme
CDCC/CIS/E/83.2 Rev. 1.	The Caribbean Information System and its activities (1979-1983) - CDC

Presentations by National Representatives

- Presentation by Barbados
- An assessment of CARISPLAN in relation to Belize - Charles Gibson
- Report on the work carried out by the Caribbean Information System in the Republic of Cuba - JUCEPLAN
- The Impact of the Caribbean Information System on the Government Documentation Centre in Dominica
- Informe sobre la posibilidad de desarrollo el CARISPLAN en la Republica Dominicana
- Position paper - Grenada
- National socio-economic network of Planning Information Units in Guyana
- The Caribbean Information System in Haiti
- Assessment of the Use of the Caribbean Information System in Jamaica - National Planning Agency
- Presentation for the Evaluation of the Caribbean Information System - Gracelyn Cassell, Montserrat
- Report from Netherlands Antilles f for the Evaluation Meeting on CARISPLAN - Doreen Jöbsis-Stomp
- Report on the Caribbean Information System in St. Kitts

- Presentation by representative of St. Lucia.
- The Caribbean Information System - St. Vincent and the Grenadines. CARISPLAN National Focal Point.
- Suriname - Presentation fo the stichting Planbureau.
- Report on CARISPLAN by Trinidad and Tobago National Focal Point.
- Presentation of the Caribbean Development Bank.

CDCC/CIS/E/83/5 - Impact of the Caribbean Information System on the Activities of the Caribbean Community Secretariat; with special reference to CARISPLAN Abstracts.

CDCC/CIS/E/83/4 - Evalustion of the Technical Aspects of the Caribbean Information System - CDC

CDCC/CIS/E/83/3 - Evaluation of the Products of the System, with specific reference to CARISPLAN Abstracts and the Current Awareness Bulletin of the Caribbean Documentation Centre - CDC.

CDCC/CIS/E/83/7 - Evaluation of CARBIB and CARCAT data bases - CDC.

CDCC/CIS/E/83/9 - The Services of the Caribbean Information System - CDC.

2. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Manual for Use of the Bibliographic Record Card 1983.
- List of Proposed Descriptors (submitted for use in the Caribbean Information System).
- Moss, Alan, Research needs and document delivery services: the case of the Caribbean Libraries. Presented to ACURIL XIV, Aruba, 17-22 April, 1983.

- UN. DIESA. Information Systems Unit. The "Macrothesaurus Management Project" - Project description and guidelines for participation 1982.

- UN. ECLA. Subregional Office for the Caribbean. Major Statistical Publications - Abstracts. Port of Spain, 1983.